

## THE GRAPEVINE

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THE GRAPEVINE is an official publication of the Veterans Home of California, produced bi-weekly by the Public Information Office. For information call (707) 944-4541. Get your own copy delivered every other Friday. The service is arranged by calling the Public Information Office at (707) 944-4541. Send subscriptions and articles for publication to: GRAPEVINE, Public Information Office, Veterans Home of California, PO Box 1200, Yountville, CA 94599. FAX to: (707) 944-4542.

# The Grapevine

**Newsletter of the Yountville Veterans Home**

**March 26, 2009**

## Veterans Home celebrates 125 years!



### 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Special Celebrations

#### *April 1, 2009 Founder's Day*

- 11:00am – **Main Dining Room**  
1:00pm Special Luncheon  
(Special pricing for outside guests)
- 1:30pm **Main Chapel**  
◆ Film and Slide Show
- 2:30pm – **Lincoln Theater Lobby**  
4:30pm ◆ Performance by Senior Chorale  
◆ Ice Cream Social  
◆ Hall of Fame Induction  
◆ Sales of 125th Anniversary Memorabilia  
◆ Historical Displays

#### *April 2, 2009*

- 10:00am **Memory Care Center**  
(Home Members Only)  
◆ Film and Slide Show  
◆ Ice Cream Social
- 1:30pm **Hospital Recreation Area**  
(Home Members Only)  
◆ Video, Slide Show  
◆ Ice Cream Social  
◆ Jammers
- 5:30pm – **Lincoln Theater Lobby**  
7:00pm ◆ Chamber Mixer  
◆ Live Music  
Donations by Lake Side Grill and Haven Winery

#### *April 3, 2009*

- 1:30 pm **Hospital Recreation Area**  
◆ Grant Ave. Follies

#### *April 4, 2009*

- 10:00am – **Holderman Hospital in front**  
1:00pm ◆ Napa Valley Cruisers & Golden Hills  
Mustangs Club Car Show

## The California State Veterans Home at Yountville

### *A Brief History*

*By Lou Zauner*

Surrounded by forested peaks, flowers and magnificent vineyards, the Veterans Home at Yountville is situated in one of the most beautiful sites in scenery-rich California – the Napa Valley. Spacious lawns and 550 acres of trees with 150 different varieties surround the Mediterranean-style buildings. Currently home to 1,100 Members with a Staff of nearly 900, it is the largest and third oldest veterans home in the nation.

#### *Here is how it all began.*

The year had reached almost 1870 when a group known as the Society of Mexican War Veterans first proposed a veterans home for California. Although the Legislature had passed a bill for a plot of land in San Francisco, the group was not formidable enough to begin construction. However, the idea and vision of a veterans home had not vanished, and, in 1877 the Lincoln Post of the Grand Army of the Republic initiated the necessary means to obtain the land and build the home. The Grand Army of the Republic is credited with being the first of veterans organizations, formed by the Union after the Civil War. The GAR was organized to define what



it meant to be a veteran and to explain the identity to non-veterans. At the 1877 meeting of Civil War Veterans in San Francisco, J.J. Lyon, a former Lieutenant Colonel who served under Abraham Lincoln in the Union Army, eloquently spoke in favor of a home for disabled and indigent veterans. The Civil War, including comrades from the earlier Mexican War left many veterans ill or disabled, unemployed and without family or social support. A committee was appointed and actually took title to the San Francisco site granted by the Legislature, but then decided the location should be a “home in the country” where the veterans could have work and enjoy the beauty of the countryside. Also, an important issue to



First Entrance to the Veterans Home

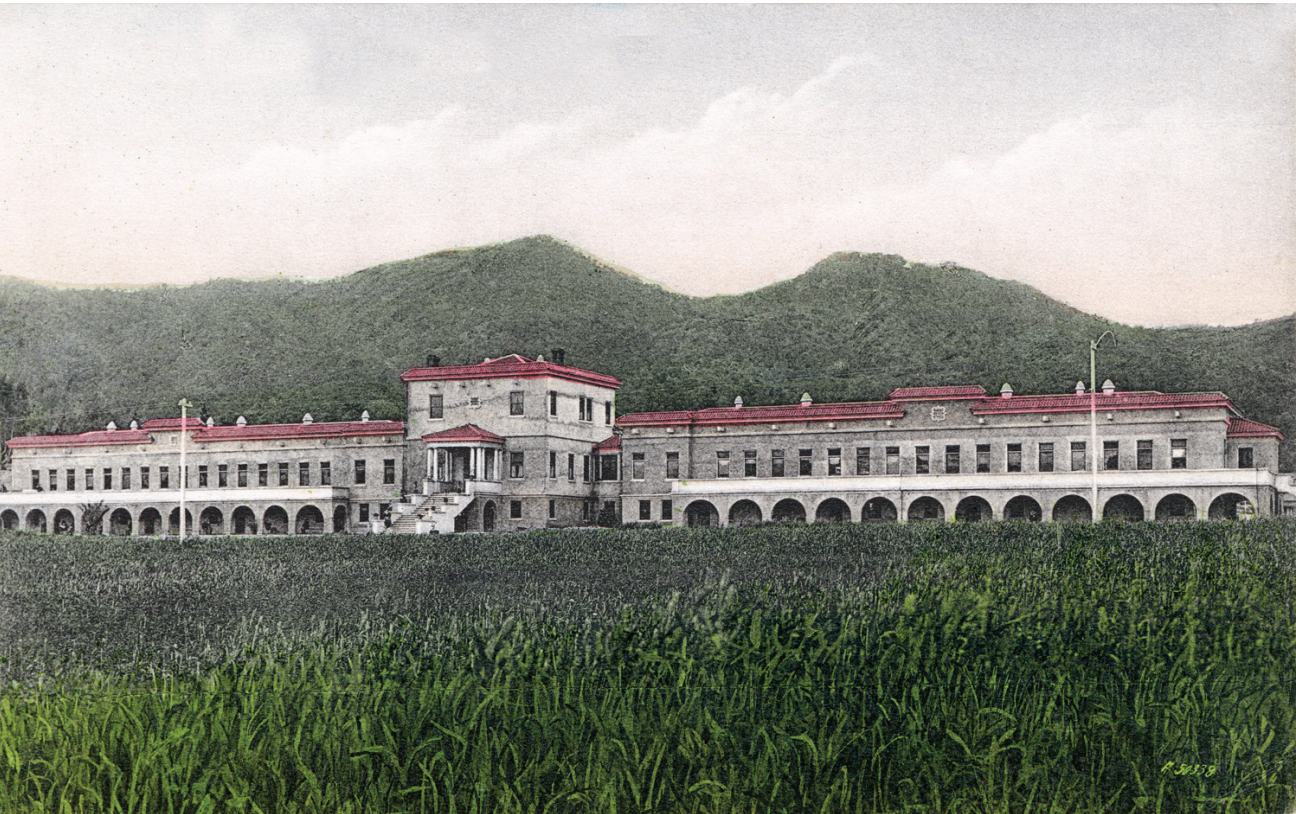


Original Administration Building included dormitories, hospital, dining, library, chapel and offices.

the committee was a site which would provide an honorable formal burial for veterans. In 1881, a Thanksgiving weekend fund raising event raised \$40,000 in public donations with an additional \$20,000 following the next two years. The search for the ideal site began.

After a search of 27 sites, a property adjoining a small village known as Yountville was selected. In 1882 the

property was purchased. The Grand Army of the Republic and the Society of Mexican War Veterans had combined to form a Veterans Home Association and the Association paid \$17,500 for 910 acres of land. Known as the A.G. Clark Place, it was part of Salvador Vallejo’s Napa Rancho. The land was a working farm when purchased and the Association continued to farm, while an administration building, the first structure for the Home was completed



in 1883. A sum of \$16,150.50 had been obtained in additional funds to provide that first structure – a combination dormitory, hospital, dining room, library, chapel and offices. However, funding for equipment for the new facility had not yet been received and the opening day delayed. It was decided that April 16, the date of the signing of the peace at Appomattox that ended the Civil War, would be appropriate.

On April 1, 1884, the Veterans Home at Yountville officially opened its doors early to accommodate the first 13 Home Members – veterans who had arrived early. Following, a total of 42 Members within the next few days occupied the Home and brought Colonel J.J. Lyon’s dream to reality.

Success of the new Home and rapid growth – new residents and new building – brought the inevitable financial pressures. The Home had received funding from both the state and federal governments, but in 1896, the federal government decided it would no longer pay allowances to privately-owned soldier’s homes. In actuality, the Veterans Home Association never intended to continuously operate the Home and was looking possibly for the federal government to take over. The State of California came forward to salvage the needed funding. Accordingly, the Veterans Home Association sold the 910 acres of land with now 55 buildings, a successful farming operation, a dairy herd, hog farm and chicken ranch to the State for one 20-dollar gold piece. It was now “The Veterans Home of California.” In 1900, when the State took over, there were 800 members. The former ownership, the Veterans Home Association still operated the Home. However, almost 20 years later, the Home became overcrowded, the buildings growing old and new structures not being built. The vitality had disappeared.

The first hospital building was on the west side of the Home.





*Original Lincoln Library*

In 1919, World War I hero, Colonel Nelson M. Holderman, was appointed Commandant of the Home. The need for improvements and change were apparent to the new Commandant but the Civil War veterans, who were still in control, resisted Colonel Holderman's demand for new buildings, new programs and change. To avoid confrontation, Colonel Holderman resigned his position but promised to return. With five more years of deterioration and changes in controlling personnel, it was in 1926 that brought a reappointment to Colonel Holderman.



*First building housing the Lincoln Theater and Lincoln Library.*

From the Holderman years, 1926 to his passing in 1953, the Homes' physical plant was completely rebuilt and a needed 500-bed hospital established. As a Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient Veteran of WW I, and possibly the first or second most decorated American soldier of that war, Colonel Holderman's fame and popularity, partnered with his dedication and constant work for the Home, achieved his goals. In 1933 the four-story hospital was constructed as part of a 10-year building program. On June 6, 1954, upon completion of a new hospital wing, then-California Governor Goodwin J. Knight announced to a gathered crowd of 10,000, "I dedicate this the Nelson M. Holderman Hospital."



*Original Lincoln Theater*

*The Bandstand (Gazebo) is the oldest structure at the Home.*

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During the 1970's, the Home faced decreased funding. Facilities were deteriorating and staffing becoming difficult. With the future of the Home in question, the California Department of Health Services and Federal Department of Health, Education and Welfare were threatening to withdraw certification from the Home. The California Legislature once again came to its rescue and approved a \$100 million dollar renovation program continuing California's commitment to its veterans.

In the next 40 years came a lot of renovations and private/public partnerships. These partnerships include The Veterans Home of California – Yountville, The Town of Yountville, Friends of the Lincoln Theater and Napa Valley Museum.

★ 1998 – Napa Valley Museum opened its doors to the Community. Home Members receive free membership and free entry to the Museum and its exhibits.

★ 1998 – A county local combined fire station and sheriffs' substation was opened on the Veterans Home Grounds.

★ 1999 – The Veterans Home appointed the first woman Administrator, Marcella M. McCormack. Prior to coming to Yountville, Ms. McCormack was a 20-year career officer in the United States Navy Medical Service Corps.

★ 1999 – Championship 9 hole Vintners Golf Club opened on the grounds of the Veterans Home of California – Yountville. Home Members are welcome to play free of charge Monday through Friday as part of their membership to the Veterans Home.

★ 2003 – Renovation of the Hospital Recreation Center (HRA) was completed, ending a 16-year project to renovate Holderman Hospital which was built in 1931.

★ 2005 – The Friends of the Lincoln Theater (Committee established to raise money and run the Lincoln Theater)

along with the Veterans Home opened the doors to the newly remodeled Theater. Once an auditorium type arena, it is now a World Class Theater. The Friends of the Lincoln Theater raised approximately \$20 Million to make this extraordinary renovation.

★ 2007 – Although on State Property, the Town of Yountville assumed 90% of the \$750,000 pool renovation costs for a 20 year lease with optional 10-year extensions. The pool now has classes, open swims and private swims for Home Members.

★ 2008 – Construction began in the Member Services Building to renovate and upgrade the entire building. This building houses a Coffee Shop, Tavern, Library, Bowling Alley, Post Exchange Store, Grant Hall auditorium and numerous other activity rooms.

On a directory plaque at the Holderman Hospital entrance the following Latin words appear: "Lector, si monumentum, queris, circumspice." Translation: "Reader if you seek a monument, look around you."

The California State Veterans Home at Yountville is a monument and model for all veterans' homes, and a tribute to heroism.

## 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Memorabilia Sale

Wednesday, March 25, 2009

Coffee Shop 9:00am – 1:00pm

Thursday, March 26, 2009

ACC Lobby 10:00am – 1:00pm

Wednesday, April 1,

Lincoln Theater Lobby 2:30pm – 4:00pm

Thursday, April 2, 2009

Chamber Mixer – Lincoln Theater Lobby

5:30pm – 7:00pm

Hooded Zipper Sweatshirts \$25.00

Crew Neck Sweatshirts \$20.00

Denim Shirts (long and short sleeves) \$20.00

Vests \$25.00



## Upcoming Lincoln Theater Performances

Sat, Mar. 28 at 8pm



*SHOUT! The 2nd Coming* is a hilarious night of clean comedy presented by Prayer Dudz and hosted by Mark Christopher Lawrence of NBC's hit television series Chuck. The show features an all headliner cast of comics. Scheduled to appear with Mark are headliners Scott Wood and Bone Hampton. Also, musical guest Josh Damigo and a special guest comedian. A portion of every ticket sold will benefit the Napa Valley Coalition charities Being Independent and New Life Outreach.

Sun, Mar. 29 at 3pm



*The San Francisco Ballet School Trainees*, a group of twelve pre-professional dancers, aged 17-19 will showcase their talents in an afternoon of classical and contemporary dance. This international roster of top-level dance students will perform choreography by Helgi Tomasson, Parrish Maynard, John Neumeier and others. The Trainee Program is a one year program which includes intensive dance training, theatrical studies, teaching and choreographic seminars and performance opportunities. Supervised by Jean-Yves Esquerre, former Artistic Director of the Ballets de Monte Carlo and coordinated by Wendy Van Dyck, former principal dancer of San Francisco Ballet, this comprehensive program prepares students for professional life. Enjoy this rare opportunity to be among the first to glimpse the ballet stars of tomorrow!

Sun, Apr. 5 at 3pm



*Napa Valley Symphony Classical Tastes*: Classical Symphony, op. 25 by Serge Prokofiev; Piano Concerto in C major No. 21 by W.A. Mozart; Symphony No. 8, op. 93, F major by Ludwig van Beethoven. Guest pianist Simone Dinnerstein.

Sun, Apr. 26 at 3pm



*The San Francisco Scottish Fiddlers* with Alasdair Fraser World-renowned Scottish fiddler, Alasdair Fraser, will take audiences on a lively musical journey to Scotland, Cape Breton and other points on the Celtic music map as he directs the San Francisco Scottish Fiddlers, whom he has called "...a wild bunch of anarchistic, rabble-rousing musicians." Fast-paced and family-friendly, the concerts feature more than 100 tartan-clad musicians – fiddles, cellos, piano, guitars, percussion, woodwinds and more (harmonica, anyone?) – filling the stage with music and energy. With singing, dancing, audience participation, and Fraser's inspired fiddle solos, it's like a dance party in a concert hall. Fraser and the Fiddlers create musical magic.

Thu, Apr. 30 at 7pm



*Mariachi Divas* The "Divas" have won the Grammy Award for best Regional Mexican Album of the Year "Canciones De Amor." The group, which has about 20 members, has included women of Mexican Cuban, Samoan, Argentinian, Swiss, Japanese, Tonga and Anglo descent, just to name a few.

Sat, May 9 at 5pm



*Napa Valley Symphony Pops Concert* "Tribute to Love" with Simone, a singer, songwriter and performer whose ability to transcend genres echoes the tradition of her mother Nina Simone.

Sun, May 17 at 5pm



*Greater Tuna* is the first in a series of hilarious plays, each set in the Fictional town of Tuna, Texas, the "third-smallest" town in the state where the Lion's Club is too liberal and Patsy Cline never dies. The eclectic band of citizens that make up this town are portrayed by only two performers, Joe Sears and Jaston Williams, making this satire on life in rural America even more delightful as they depict all of the inhabitants of Tuna -- men, women, children and animals.

Fri, May 29 at 8pm



*Napa Valley Symphony* with cellist Lynn Harrell. Mendelssohn, Stravinsky, Dvorak.

Thank you, AMVETS, for your continued support of the Yountville Veterans Home Media Program



## Special Events for Residential Care Members

For cancellations, notify the Activities Office at least 48 hours before the trip at 944-4900. "No Shows" will be on a standy-by-only basis for 60 days.

Date	Time	Event	Location
1-Wed	All Day	Founders Day Celebrations Many Activitys -	see ad
2-Thu	All Day	Founders Day Celebrations Many Activitys -	see ad
4-Sat	8:30am	Bodega Bay -"Fisherman's Festival"	MDR
5-Sun	9:30am	Horse Racing - Golden Gate Fields	MDR
5-Sun	3:00pm	"NVS" - Simone Dinnerstein Pianist	LT
6-Mon	9:30am	Allied Council Executive Meeting	HRA
7-Tue	2:30pm	Taco Tuesday - "Compadres, Napa"	MDR
8-Wed	9:00am	Allied Council Meeting	HRA
8-Wed	5:00pm	Warriors vs. Minnesota	MDR
9-Thu	10:00am	Remembrance Service	Chapel
9-Thu	12:30pm	LeMelange/Library	MDR
9-Thu	2:00pm	Dix Bruce Jazz Band	HRA
10-Fri	8:30am	Tractor & Truck Museum - Woodland	MDR
12-Sun	10:30am	Baseball - Rivercats Vs. Tacoma	MDR
13-Mon	10:00am	Shopping - Costco/Smart & Final/Vallejo	MDR
14-Tue	8:30am	Breakfast Club - "Omelet Bistro Vacaville"	MDR
14-Tue	1:30pm	Bread & Roses Concert	HRA
14-Tue	5:30pm	Pinnochle Tournament	HRA
15-Wed	9:30am	Rubicon Estates - Rutherford Owned by "Francis Ford Coppola	MDR
17-Fri	10:45am	Bunch for Lunch - "Chinese Mini Garden"	MDR
19-Sun	7:30am	Napa Senior Breakfast	MDR
20-Mon	10:00am	Shopping - Fairfield Mall	MDR
21-Tue	10:30am	"Culinary Institute of America" Demonstration and Lunch	MDR
22-Wed	5:30am	"Sport Fishing Trip in SanFrancisco Bay" - Aboard the New Eldorado III	MDR
23-Thu	12:30pm	LeMelange/Library	MDR
24-Fri	8:15am	San Francisco Ferry Trip - From Vallejo	MDR
25-Sat	10:30am	Baseball - Oakland A's vs. Tampa Bay	MDR
26-Sun	10:30am	Baseball - Rivercats Vs. Las Vegas	MDR
26-Sun	3:00pm	The San Francisco Scottish Fiddlers with Alasdair Fraser.	LT
27-Mon	10:00am	Shopping - Target/Raleys/WalMart - Napa	MDR
30-Thu	7:00pm	"Mariachi Divas" - Emmy Award Winners	LT

HRA: Hospital Recreation Area.  
Home Members, for information about off-ground trips, Lincoln Theater performances, and to sign up, call the Activities Office at 944-4900.

## Movies in Holderman Rec Area

All movies begin at 6pm

Date	Time	Movie
3-27	Fri	W (PG-13)
4-1	Wed	San Francisco
4-3	Fri	Secret Lives of Bees (PG-13)
4-6	Mon	Belle of the Yukon
4-7	Tue	Blackmail
4-8	Wed	Shine (PG-13)
4-10	Fri	Milk (R)
4-13	Mon	There's No Business Like Show Business
4-15	Wed	The Goodbye Girl (PG)
4-17	Fri	Rachel's Getting Married (R)
4-20	Mon	Young at Heart
4-21	Tue	Along the Great Divide
4-22	Wed	Camille
4-24	Fri	Transsiberian (R)
4-27	Mon	Am American in Paris
4-28	Tue	Cabin in the Cotton
4-20	Wed	Long Hot Summer

Holderman Recreation Area is located on the first floor of Holderman Hospital at the west end of the building.